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TURKISH - AMERICAN RELATIONS POST 9/11

by

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TURKISH - AMERICAN RELATIONS POST 9/11

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ABSTRACT

After the September 11 attacks, the U.S. initiated the Global War on Terror. Prosecution of this war has become a defining objective of the Bush era in American foreign policy. Following the invasion of Afghanistan, the United States invaded Iraq. As part of the invasion plan, the United States requested permission to deploy troops in Turkey to invade Iraq over its northern frontiers. The subsequent rejection of this request by the Turkish Parliament destabilized the relationship between the United States and Turkey. These events have placed U.S.-Turkish relations on an uncertain footing. This thesis seeks to explore the path towards the crisis in these relations. It argues that the parameters of the bilateral relations have changed significantly since the September 11 attacks. The thesis provides a chronological analysis of history of Turkish-American relations focusing on the recent events. Last, the thesis will offer recommendations on how U.S.-Turkish relations can be restored, drawing upon the lessons of the past between these two countries.

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I. THESIS INTRODUCTION

Turkey's geostrategic importance in containing the Soviet threat formed an overriding backdrop that helped create a close relationship between Turkey and the United States throughout the Cold War. Turkey joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952 after joining the United Nations coalition that contributed forces to the Korean War. During the Cold War, the Turkish-U.S. relationship improved but was periodically shaken by events such as the Turkish intervention in Cyprus in 1974 and the US embargo in 1975–78. However, in general, it can be said that the Turkey-U.S. relationship successfully contributed to the strategy of containment of the communist threat.¹

With the end of the Cold War, Turkey's geostrategic role in the world underwent a change and some argued that Turkey had lost its strategic importance. As a result, U.S.-Turkish relations received criticisms in both countries. The relationship endured during the 1990s. Operation Desert Storm was seen by supporters of the relationship as a pivotal event, showing that despite the end of the Cold War, the bilateral relationship between the United States and Turkey was still important. For this reason, Turkey and the United States labeled their bilateral relationship an enhanced partnership in 1991.²

The conflicts that arose around the globe after 1990 created opportunities for both countries to enhance this partnership in other significant ways. In this decade, Turkey joined many international efforts to sustain peace and stability, contributing troops to more than thirty operations around the globe.³ Turkey sent three hundred troops into Somalia under the UNOSOM II (United Nations

¹ Naci Dogan, "International System in the Point of the New World System, the Role of NATO and the Strategic Position of Turkey," *Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 10 (2005): 25.

² Omer Goksel Isyar, "An Analysis of Turkish-American Relations from 1945 to 2004: Initiatives and Reactions in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 4, No. 3 (2005), p. 33, <http://www.alternativesjournal.net/volume4/number3/isyar.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2007).

³ Contribution of Turkish Armed Forces to Peace Support Operations, <http://www.tsk.mil.tr/eng/uluslararası/barisdestekkatki.htm> (accessed March 1, 2007).

Operation in Somalia) command in 1993 and at various points served as the command element for the force. Acting on its historical ties, Turkey sent fourteen hundred troops to help its Bosnian friends under UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) command in 1993. These troops worked also under the IFOR (Implementation Force) command. Kosovo was another crisis in which Turkish and U.S. forces worked together under NATO command. Turkey contributed to the NATO air operation, supplying it with twenty-one planes including F-16 fighters and KC-135 aerial refueling tankers in 1999. Intelligence cooperation with the U.S. during the capture of the bloody terrorist leader Abdullah Ocalan in February 1999, as well as U.S. President Clinton's naming of the Turkish-American relationship a strategic partnership during his Turkish Grand National Assembly address, in November 1999, can be seen as proof of the warm bilateral relationship.⁴

As a country that has been fighting terrorism since the 1980s, Turkey condemned the September 11 attacks against the United States and proclaimed its allegiance with the United States in its war on terrorism. To that end, Turkey has commanded the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan twice and contributed varying numbers of troops to this force.⁵

However, in March 2003 in a controversial decision, the Turkish Grand National Assembly disallowed the passage of U.S. troops through Turkey to Iraq. Turkey did permit coalition forces to use its airspace.⁶ Consequently, bilateral relations suffered, and it took some time and effort to recover from that point.

In spite of the fact that these events shook the bilateral relationship between the two countries, it appeared that Turkey and the United States had somewhat restored their close relationship at the NATO Summit in Istanbul in June 2004. There, U.S. President George W. Bush stated that Turkey was of

⁴ Kemal Koprulu, "Paradigm Shift in Turkish-US Relations," Turkish Policy Quarterly 4, No.1, (2005), p. 2, http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/esi_turkey_tpq_id_23.pdf (accessed March 1, 2007).

⁵ International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Operation, <http://www.tsk.mil.tr/eng/uluslararasi/isaf.htm> (accessed March 1, 2007).

⁶ Aylin Guney, *An Anatomy of the Transformation of the US-Turkish Alliance: From Cold War to War on Iraq*, Turkish Studies, Vol. 6, No. 3, September 2005, p. 351.

vital importance for peace in Europe and the Middle East.⁷ In the meantime, in its support for the reconstruction efforts in Iraq, Turkey steadily became a vital logistical base for Iraq. Many Turkish companies have contributed to the reconstruction process. In addition to this, the basic needs of the Iraqi people — including food, electricity and water — have been supplied through Turkey.⁸ As further proof of warming relations, Turkey and the United States jointly signed a Shared Vision statement in July 2006.⁹

Turkey and the United States also dispatched special envoys to discuss possible joint efforts to counter the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) terrorist organization.¹⁰ This mechanism proved to be fruitless as the leaders from both sides, designated to coordinate these efforts, left their posts within one year. In addition, the House Foreign Affairs Committee voted to approve a resolution that recognized the deportation of Ottoman Armenians during World War I as genocide.¹¹ As a result, bilateral relations have been strained through increasing PKK terrorist activities and U.S. inaction towards the PKK camps and their presence in northern Iraq.

This thesis argues that the parameters of the bilateral relations have changed significantly in Turkish-American relations since the end of the Cold War. During the Cold War, the main pillar of the bilateral relations was the Soviet threat of communist expansion. All other parameters in the alliance took shape according to this common threat, and thus through the eyes of Washington,

⁷ President Bush Discusses Democracy, Freedom from Turkey, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/06/20040629-4.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

⁸ Türkiye-Irak Ekonomik İlişkileri ve Türkiye'nin Yeniden İmar Sürecine Katkısı, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA_tr/DisPolitika/Bolgeler/OrtaDogu/Irak/Irak_Ekonomik.htm (accessed March 1, 2007).

⁹ Ortak Vizyon Belgesi Açıklandı, <http://www.voanews.com/turkish/archive/2006-07/2006-07-05-voa6.cfm> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁰ Special U.S. Envoy named for Countering Kurdish Terror Group, <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=August&x=20060828171825xlrennef0.3752863> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹¹ Soner Cagaptay, "The PKK and the Armenian Genocide Resolution: U.S.-Turkish Relations at a Critical Juncture," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, Policy Watch.1293 (2007), p.1, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=2669>, (accessed October 24, 2007).

Turkey was NATO's southern flank country that had vital importance against Soviet expansion in this region. On the other hand, when situations that impacted each country's own vital interests took place, both countries acted unilaterally in terms of their own interests. The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1974 Turkish Cyprus intervention are both good examples.

The end of the Cold War might be seen as the birth of the new parameters of Turkish-American relations. The relationship that had been called an enhanced partnership in 1991, increased to a strategic partnership at the end of the decade. The Soviet threat, which had been the main pillar for the alliance was gone, but sustaining peace in the Balkans and in the Middle East and helping newly emerged states from the dissolution of the Soviet Union superseded the main parameters of the bilateral relations.¹² The First Gulf War, Bosnia and the Kosovo Crisis can also be seen in this regard. The relations spectrum diversified into economic and political avenues in this decade including, increasing economic trade between the two countries, Washington's support for Turkey's accession to the E.U. and joint investments in Central Asia.¹³

The September 11 attacks and the U.S. response to the attacks by declaring war on terrorism have also affected the parameters of the bilateral relations. Incongruously, however, the major fracture has been caused by the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

This thesis aims to locate the new parameters of Turkish-American relations since the September 11 attacks. Chapter I will summarize the history of Turkish-American relations. Chapter II will employ a chronological analysis that highlights the evolving relations between the two countries after the 9/11 attacks and the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Chapter III will focus on the relations after the United States declared its intention to invade Iraq. This chapter will also cover the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of Iraq until 2006 when the PKK

¹² Remarks by the President in Address to the Turkish Grand National Assembly, <http://clinton4.nara.gov/textonly/WH/New/Europe-9911/remarks/1999-11-15d.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹³ Sedat Laciner, "Ozalism (Neo-Ottomanism): An Alternative in Turkish Foreign Policy?" *Journal of Administrative Sciences* 1 (2003): 182-85.

increased terrorist activities in Turkey. In Chapter IV, the bilateral relations up to present day will be reviewed and analyzed. Using this chronological context, it is then easy to frame the new parameters of Turkish-American relations. The conclusions chapter will attempt to articulate the reasons for the current tension in the bilateral relations, and will offer recommendations on how to restore and improve relations between the United States and Turkey.

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II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TURKISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS

A. PRE- COLD WAR

The first official Turkish–American relationship began in 1830 with a trade agreement between the Ottoman Empire and the United States.¹⁴ In the following years, both countries reciprocally opened an embassy in the other's country. In addition to these developments, American missionaries came to Ottoman lands. As missionaries from other foreign countries had already been there since 1583, however, the Americans mainly focused on the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁵ As a result, many American schools, churches and hospitals opened in the Ottoman cities where the Armenian population was high. By the late nineteenth century, these schools numbered more than four hundred.¹⁶

In 1862, the Ottoman Empire and the United States signed a second trade agreement, upon which the United States had conferred the most favored nation status. The Ottoman Empire's support of the North during the U.S. Civil War increased bilateral cooperation and confidence.¹⁷ In the years following, the Ottoman Empire began to purchase arms from the United States because the end of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century were war years for the Ottoman Empire. Although these two countries did not declare war against each other in the First World War, relations stagnated for a while because of the ongoing Independence War in Anatolia. A committee headed by

¹⁴ Fahir Armaoğlu, "Atatürk Döneminde Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri," *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 38 (1997): 1.

¹⁵ Yavuz Güler, "The Relationship between Turkey and USA in the Period of the Ottoman Empire (1795-1914)," *Gazi Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi* 6 (2005): 236. See also Cagri Erhan, "Ottoman Official Attitudes towards American Missionaries," paper presented at the conference on The United States Relations with the Middle East: Cultural Encounters, New Haven, Yale University, December 2000, pp. 315- 17.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 237.

¹⁷ Mustafa Kayar, *Türk Amerikan İlişkilerinde Irak Sorunu* (Istanbul: IQ Kultur Sanat Yayıncılık, 2003), 106.

General Harbord visited Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Sivas in 1919 to fulfill the requirements for conducting a fact-finding mission given him by the Paris Peace Conference.¹⁸ After the Turkish Independence War and the founding of the Turkish Republic, both sides reciprocally opened an embassy in the other's country in 1927.

During the early years of modern Turkey, relations became strained due to the American schools and missionary actions. In 1928, Turkish public tension increased in reaction to an event that took place in the Bursa American Girls' College. Three Turkish girls became Christian through the influence of their teacher. This event was seen as contrary to the secularism principle by the Turkish government and the judiciary; thus the school was closed.¹⁹

Turkey and the United States signed a trade agreement in 1929, but the relations between the two countries gained momentum after the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 and Atatürk's letter of condolence to the U.S. president after the Los Angeles earthquake in 1933. Continuing correspondence between Roosevelt and Atatürk played a part in warming relations between the two nations.²⁰

In 1935, General MacArthur visited Atatürk. During their talk about the future of Europe, Atatürk said:

America will not be able to avoid war and Germany will be defeated only through her interference. If authorities in Europe do not get together on the basis of controversies of political contacts and try to placate their own hatreds and interests, it will be tragic...The victorious power after the war between 1940 and 1945 will not be England, France, or Germany, but Bolshevism. Being closest to Russia and having had many wars with her in the past, Turkey is watching Russia closely and sees the whole danger developing. Russia knows how to influence and awaken the minds of Eastern

¹⁸ Hulki Cevizoglu, *İşgal ve Direniş 1919 ve Bugün* (Ankara: Ceviz Kabuğu Yayınları, 2007), 299-300.

¹⁹ Ayten Sezer, "Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e; Misyonerlerin Türkiye'deki Eğitim ve Öğretim Faaliyetleri," Hacettepe Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi Special Edition (1999), 179, www.edebiyatdergisi.hacettepe.edu.tr/700ozelAytenSezer.pdf (accessed March 1, 2007).

²⁰ Armaoglu, pp. 11-15.

countries, and how to give them ideas of nationalism. Russia has encouraged hatred towards the West. Bolshevism is getting to be a power and a great threat to Europe and Asia.²¹

General MacArthur agreed with Ataturk and added his views on the Japanese threat in Asia. At the end of their talk, Ataturk emphasized:

Our points of view are almost the same, but let us hope we see it all incorrectly and that the leaders of the other nations will come up with a better result for the whole world.²²

B. COLD WAR

During the Second World War, despite efforts from both sides, Turkey remained neutral due to the economic conditions in Turkey. Turkey was still trying to cure the deep traumas caused by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the Independence War and sought to avoid getting involved in another war that could hamper its economic recovery. Second World War ended as Ataturk had predicted. The Soviet Union emerged from the Second World War as a superpower as a consequence of its achievement in building up an impressive military might both in conventional and nuclear weaponry. In turn, they felt that they could challenge the other superpower, the United States. On March 19, 1945, the Soviet Union informed Turkey that henceforth the 1925 Treaty of Friendship and Non-Aggression Pact was invalid. In addition, on June 7, 1945, the Soviet Union initiated demands on Turkey's eastern provinces such as Kars and Ardahan, as well as some rights over the control of the Straits.

In response to the emerging Soviet and communist threat, the United States renewed its foreign policy. According to the predictions, if the Soviet Union controlled Turkey, the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean could also succumb to Soviet rule, and communist ideology would harm the vital interests of

²¹ Mahmut Esat Ozan, "Atatürk's Prophecies: Why Douglas MacArthur Believed in them too?" Voice of Ataturk, Ataturk Society of America, <http://www.ataturksociety.org/asa/voa/ozan.html> (accessed October 17, 2007).

²² Ibid.

the United States in that region. In this respect, Turkey's geostrategic position was a key factor for containing the Soviet and communist expansion. The English memorandums to the United States concerning Turkey and Greece also added to these calculations made by the United States. As a result, on March 12, 1947, U.S. President Truman addressed Congress and made the case for starting aggressive economic and military assistance programs to help these two countries. The United States started foreign aid to Turkey after signing a bilateral agreement on July 12, 1947. This proved the commitment of the United States as part of the Truman Doctrine, which focused on a policy of containment of Soviet expansion.

Turkey and the United States signed a second bilateral agreement on July 8, 1948, and Turkey received financial aid for the following three years via the Marshall Plan. With this aid, Turkey started to modernize its armed forces²³ and the United States secured a front state against the Soviet Union and in the process, "got rid of some of its Second World War surplus arms stockpile."²⁴

In 1950, in accordance with the United Nations' call, Turkey contributed more than five thousand troops to U.S.-lead military forces during the Korean War. The Menderes administration made this decision without receiving the Turkish Grand National Assembly's approval. This was the first military commitment of the Turkish Republic in which Turkish and American soldiers fought against a common enemy. Turkey lost 741 soldiers, and 2147 wounded came home. The Turkish Brigade's bravery increased Turkish popularity among UN forces, as well as its U.S. counterparts during this war.²⁵ It might be said that the military commitment of Turkey in the Korean War was clear evidence that Turkey had chosen to align itself with the U.S. in this new bipolar world. Before the end of the war, in 1952, Turkey joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

²³ Feroz Ahmad, "The Historical Background of Turkey's Foreign Policy," in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, ed. Lenore G. Martin and Dimitris Keridis (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2004), 30. Also see Metin Aydoğan, *Bitmeyen Oyun: Türkiye'yi Bekleyen Tehlikeler* (Istanbul: Umay Yayınları, 2004), 133-53.

²⁴ Guler, p. 219.

²⁵ Guney, p. 342.

(NATO). Amikam Nachmani argued that, “Turkey’s participation in the Korean War bought it the entrance ticket into the NATO.”²⁶ In contrast, Feroz Ahmad claimed that Turkish President Bayar’s expression over Turkey’s reappraising of its Cold War orientation was the driving force for Turkey’s admittance into NATO.²⁷

Because of the Soviet threat, NATO membership was considered highly important by Turkish decision makers. On the other hand, Turkey’s strategic location was seen as vital by other members of NATO — especially by the United States — as a way to contain Soviet expansion. In this respect, it might be relevant to say that the Turkish commitment to the Korean War opened the door to cooperation between both nations.

Turkey and the United States signed many bilateral agreements and acted mutually supportive between 1950 and 1960. During these years, Turkey and the United States searched for ways to unite the Middle East countries against the Soviet threat, in spite of the fact that in May of 1953 the Soviet Union claimed it had no designs on Turkey.²⁸ The Middle East Defense Organization was a mutually supportive agreement that could not be successfully achieved due to the refusal of Egyptian President Nasser to support the initiative. However, in 1955, the Baghdad Pact began with a formal agreement between Turkey and Iraq.²⁹ Pakistan, Iran and the United Kingdom later joined the Baghdad Pact. The United States did not join the pact but did support it. In 1959, the Baghdad Pact became known as the Central Treaty Organization because of Iraq’s withdrawal from the pact. In 1954, Turkey and the United States signed a bilateral agreement, which allowed the United States to open a military base and to station military personnel in Turkey. According to Aylin Guney, the U.S. gained

²⁶ Amikam Nachmani, *Turkey: Facing a New Millennium Coping with Intertwined Conflicts* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 1.

²⁷ Ahmad, p. 32.

²⁸ William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002), 122.

²⁹ Kayar, pp. 123- 125.

access to over thirty installations with five thousand U.S. personnel, which were engaged in defense missions including intelligence-collecting activities.³⁰ In 1958, Turkey allowed the U.S. to use the Incirlik air base for the intervention in Lebanon, even though it was not a NATO operation.³¹ In light of all of these mutual attempts, the 1950s could be seen as years of harmony for Turkish-American bilateral relations.

In contrast, the 1960s were years in which this mutual and supportive relationship became questionable, especially by Turkey. The opening of the decade came with the U-2 crisis between Washington and Moscow in 1960³² when the Soviets shot down a U.S. U-2 spy plane over Soviet territory. Moscow threatened Turkey because it had allowed the plane to use Turkish bases. Turkey defended itself, declaring that the U-2 took off from Pakistan and headed to Norway; thus Turkey was in no way responsible for the situation. On the other hand, Turkey had requested information from the U.S. about these kinds of flights and canceled all U-2 flights from its soil. The crisis initiated a debate in Turkey concerning the reliability of the U.S.³³

In addition to the U-2 crisis in 1960, tension increased between Turkish-American decision makers over the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. Turkish decision makers worried that Jupiter missiles in Turkey would be a bargaining chip between Washington and Moscow at the beginning of the crisis.³⁴ They shared their concern with their American counterparts, who assured them that this would not be the case. Internally, Turkey conducted a remarkable debate about the installation of the Jupiter missiles. Because of its alliance with the U.S., the Turkish administration turned down the Soviet Union's November 1961 offer

³⁰ Guney, p. 342.

³¹ Hale, p. 129. See also Karasapan, p. 6.

³² Yakup Beriş and Asli Gürkan, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerine Bakış: Ana Temalar ve Güncel Gelişmeler," *TUSIAD ABD Temsilciliği Değerlendirme Raporu* (July 2002), p. 6.

³³ Kayar, p. 126.

³⁴ Ian Q. R. Thomas, *The Promise of Alliance: NATO and the Political Imagination*. (NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1997), 69-70.

of some \$500 million as part of the Soviet Aid Programme.³⁵ However, if Washington decided to remove the Jupiter missiles, it would not have been easy for the Turkish authorities to explain to the people. The Turkish authorities had told the Turkish public many times that the missiles represented an alliance and that they were under joint control.³⁶ In reality, the Kennedy administration began negotiations for the removal of the Jupiter missiles from Turkey with the Khrushchev administration. During the crisis, Turkey was not informed about these developments,³⁷ and when the crisis was resolved, Turkey learned that Washington had bargained with the Soviet Union about the Jupiter missiles without any prior consultation with Turkey.

The whole world collectively breathed a sigh of relief at the peaceful resolution of the crisis at the end of October, but the U.S.-Soviet agreement demonstrated to Ankara that Washington could and would act unilaterally when its national interests were at stake.³⁸ As a result, the event aroused suspicion in Turkey about Washington's understanding of the alliance. In order to lessen public reaction to this matter, the Turkish Foreign Minister had to announce that the missiles were removed because they were not helpful in the protection of Turkey.³⁹

The 1960s were also important for Turkey in relation to the events that occurred in Cyprus. The Greek and Turkish people of Cyprus formed the Cyprus Republic in 1960 wherein Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom became the guarantors of the nations on the island and of the Cyprus Republic. In practice, the Greek side attempted to change the constitution and began to realize the Akritas Plan (The plan was aimed toward the eventual unification of the island

³⁵ Hale, p. 122.

³⁶ Karasapan, p. 6.

³⁷ Beris and Gurkan, p. 6.

³⁸ Kayar, p. 126.

³⁹ Turgut Akgul, "An Analysis of the 1964 Johnson Letter: Lessons for the 2003 Iraq Crisis, Turkish American Relations, and Global Power regional Partner Interactions" (Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004), 19.

with Greece⁴⁰), which has never been denied by the Greek side.⁴¹ Greek Cypriot police and the Greek Cypriot Army attacked Turkish homes and villages to kill Turkish people in December 1963.⁴² The photographs of the mass killing, the “Bloody Christmas” photographs, appeared in Turkish newspapers, which initiated huge protest meetings in Turkey.

Until 1963, the U.S. generally pursued a policy of non-intervention in the Cyprus situation. The U.S. approach changed after 1963 as a result of Turkey’s threat to intervene militarily and Greece’s threat to withdraw from NATO. The U.S. wanted to prevent weaknesses inside NATO that might have invited possible Soviet involvement and exploitation.⁴³

On June 5, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson sent a letter to Turkish president Ismet Inonu that had profound effects on U.S.-Turkish relations.⁴⁴ In this letter, the United States asserted that in the event there was a Turkish invasion of Cyprus, this could leave Turkey face-to-face with the Soviets, and NATO and the U.S. would not help Turkey in this situation.⁴⁵ The United States also informed Turkey that it could not use the weapons that Turkey had purchased from the United States.⁴⁶ In response to these developments, Turkey delayed its military operation. On the other hand, Turkey understood that both sides perceived the situation on Cyprus much differently. Ankara gradually came to the realization that Turkey might have to act unilaterally and face the consequences from the United States. It is generally accepted that Johnson's

⁴⁰ Zaim M. Necatigil, *The Cyprus Question and the Turkish Position in International Law* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1996), 28.

⁴¹ Rauf R. Denktash, *The Cyprus Triangle* (London: George Allen & Unwin Publishers Ltd., 1982), 28.

⁴² Necatigil, p. 32.

⁴³ Akgul, p. 92.

⁴⁴ Serdar Çelebi, “Johnson’in Mektubu ve İnönü’nün Buna Cevabı,” <http://www.habusulu.com/makale44.htm> (accessed October 17, 2007).

⁴⁵ Kayar, p. 127.

⁴⁶ Patrick F. Gillis, “US-Turkish Relations: The Road to Improving a Troubled Strategic Partnership,” (Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, 2004), 1-2. <http://stinet.dtic.mil/dticrev/PDFs/ADA424313.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2007).

letter compelled the Turkish government and the Turkish public to take a closer look at the very nature of the Turkish-American relations.⁴⁷ Thus, because of Turkish requests, bilateral agreements between the two countries were revised and collected under the Bilateral Defense and Cooperation Agreement in 1969.⁴⁸ Inside Turkey, the effect of the troubled bilateral relations appeared as a growing anti-Americanism. This anti-American rhetoric reached such high levels in Turkey that even the United States banned its officers based in Turkey from wearing military uniforms in the public environment.⁴⁹

In 1974, the situation in Cyprus deteriorated when on 15 July 1974 Greek officers and the EOKA (National Organization of Cypriot Fighters) organized a coup d'état in Cyprus. In reaction, Turkey began the Cyprus Peace Operation on 20 July 1974, after Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit's joint action offer was rejected by his British counterpart.⁵⁰ Congressional pressure in the United States subsequently led to an arms embargo against Turkey in 1975. According to Guney, Turkey realized that its foreign policy had been too one-dimensional.⁵¹ Turkey responded to this embargo by revoking the Bilateral Defense and Cooperation Agreement and closed all foreign military base activities except NATO mission activities.⁵² Then, Prime Minister Ecevit lifted the ban that prohibited opium production, which had been demanded by the U.S.⁵³ In parallel to these developments, Turkey tried to diversify its source of arms imports and improve the development of a domestic arms industry.⁵⁴ In 1978, following Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit's remarks that mentioned Turkey's inclination to

⁴⁷ Mehmet Dulger, "Taking a Closer Look at Turkish-American Relations," *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 3, No. 2 (2004), p.10 http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/esi_turkey_tpq_id_17.pdf (accessed March 1, 2007).

⁴⁸ Isyar, p. 25.

⁴⁹ Kayar, p. 129.

⁵⁰ Necatigil, p. 94.

⁵¹ Guney, p. 343.

⁵² Kayar, p. 130.

⁵³ Isyar, p. 27.

⁵⁴ Guney, p. 343.

alter camp, the efforts to stop the embargo were increased in the United States.⁵⁵ The embargo was revoked on August 1, 1978.

In the following years, Turkey suffered hard times for domestic reasons. On the other hand, the United States needed Turkey's support in the region due to cataclysmic events in 1979: the Iranian Revolution and the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union.⁵⁶ U.S. President Ronald Reagan subsequently talked about bringing the Turkish-American relationship "back to the period of the fifties."⁵⁷ On March 29, 1980, Turkey and the United States signed the Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement.⁵⁸ This agreement showed both nations' desire to enhance their economic, defense and related scientific and technological cooperation.⁵⁹ On September 12, 1980, Turkish Armed Forces seized control of the country due to ongoing violence and political instability. According to Omer Goksel Isyar, after this event, the United States began to occupy a more important place than Europe in Turkish foreign policy.⁶⁰ At the very least, according to Aylin Guney, military intervention did not cause any harmful consequence to the existing bilateral relations.⁶¹

In parallel to the 1980 agreement, Turkish and American firms established many joint projects, such as the FNSS project, a joint venture company between the Nurol Group of Turkey and the Food Machinery Corporation of the U.S., to manufacture armored infantry fighting vehicles.⁶² In the meantime, elections were held in Turkey and The Motherland Party headed by Turgut Ozal won the popular vote in 1983. During the first Reagan administration period, bilateral

⁵⁵ Kayar, p. 131.

⁵⁶ Guney, p. 343.

⁵⁷ Omer Karasapan, "Turkey and US Strategy in the Age of Glasnost," *Middle East Report*, No. 160, (Sept-Oct 1989), p. 4.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Isyar, p. 29.

⁶¹ Guney, p. 343.

⁶² Guney, p. 343.

relations improved significantly.⁶³ In 1983, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense, Richard Perle summarized the bilateral relations as “the largest, most productive and the least understood program in Southern Europe.”⁶⁴ Turkey and the United States also agreed to establish Rapid Deployment Forces, modernize some of Turkey’s airfields and build two new airfields with the aim of strengthening Turkey’s eastern defenses.⁶⁵ From the nuclear weapons perspective, Turkey also hosted a significant load in the 1980s.⁶⁶

In 1985, Turkey and the United States signed a new trade agreement to enhance bilateral economic investments. In addition to this, Turkey improved its Air Force by purchasing F-16s from the United States in 1987, and in cooperation with an American consortium, Turkey also entered this market as a producer.⁶⁷

Turkey also applied to the European Community (EC) for full membership in April 1987. The EC responded to the Turkish application in 1989, pointing out the obstacles on this road such as the economic gap, free movement of Turkish workers and political problems.⁶⁸

In the second half of the 1980s, bilateral relations between Turkey and the United States slowed mainly because of Gorbachev’s glasnost and perestroika policies. These policies opened the door to dialogue between Soviet Russia and the United States. In return, it might be said that in the eyes of the United States, Turkey’s importance as NATO’s southern flank lowered. This was reflected in U.S. military assistance to Turkey, which had peaked in 1984 with \$715 million and fell to \$526 million in 1988.⁶⁹ On the other hand, Moscow’s new policies

⁶³ Laciner, p. 173.

⁶⁴ Karasapan, p. 4.

⁶⁵ Kayar, pp. 144-146.

⁶⁶ Karasapan, p. 5.

⁶⁷ Laciner, p. 175.

⁶⁸ Laciner, pp. 174-175.

⁶⁹ Hale, p. 165.

warmed and smoothed the Turkish-Soviet relations; thus, the bilateral trade volume rose to \$1.8 billion by the end of the decade.⁷⁰

C. POST- COLD WAR

With the end of the Cold War and the tearing down of the Berlin Wall, U.S.-Turkish relations entered a new period.⁷¹ The post Cold War environment raised a debate about Turkey's future orientation both in Turkey and abroad. Some commentators posited that Turkey had lost its strategic importance because the Soviet threat had ended.⁷² Some also argued that turning to an isolationist policy was the best option for Turkey as the West no longer needed its support.⁷³ Some also proposed a closer relationship with the Islamic countries so as to establish a common market, while some also proposed closer ties with the newborn Turkic States.⁷⁴

In the United States, Congress ended the military aid program for Turkey.⁷⁵ It was during these years of uncertainty that Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990. In response to that invasion, on 6 August 1990, Resolution 661 was adopted by the Security Council postulating that all states shall prevent all trade activities with Iraq or Kuwait.⁷⁶ On 8 August, Turkey declared that it would adhere to all of the decisions of the United Nations in this matter, and Turkey shut down the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik oil pipeline that had been transporting Iraqi oil to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan to stop the Iraqi aggression. This was a considerable step for Turkey because it had been supplying 40 percent of its crude oil through this pipeline. In response to the increased tension, Turkey

⁷⁰ Hale, p. 167.

⁷¹ Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 13.

⁷² Hale, *Turkish...*, p. 192.

⁷³ Laciner, p. 176.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Guney, p. 344.

⁷⁶ Resolution 661 (1990), <http://www.casi.org.uk/info/undocs/gopher/s90/15> (accessed March 1, 2007).

increased troop levels to approximately 120,000, with air support, armor and transport along the Iraqi border. Turkey also allowed the coalition forces to use Incirlik air base.⁷⁷ According to Sabri Sayari, these decisions “marked a radical departure from Turkey’s established policy regarding noninvolvement in regional conflicts and wars.”⁷⁸

Three of Turkey’s actions played a key role in the economic and military campaign against Saddam Hussein’s regime: it shut off the twin pipelines that carried Iraq’s oil exports, it permitted the use of Incirlik Air Base, and it held down eight Iraqi divisions in the north that could otherwise have been used against the coalition forces.

Right after the First Gulf War, in April, a refugee crisis emerged when Saddam launched a military campaign to suppress the Kurdish rebellion in the north of the country. About 500,000 Iraqi Kurds escaped to the Turkish-Iraqi border. The Turkish Red Crescent, local villagers, and later on international aid agencies did their best to cope, but it soon became clear that the situation was unsustainable.⁷⁹ The Turkish National Security Council decided to appeal to the United Nations Security Council for assistance. Accordingly, Security Council Resolution 688 declared that the repression of the Iraqi civilian population threatened international peace and security in the region.⁸⁰ Thus, in 1991, Operation Provide Comfort (OPC) was created to conduct humanitarian operations and return refugees to their homes. In July, OPC was replaced by Operation Poised Hammer, which was also generally known in Turkey as Cekic Guc. The no-fly zone was established on 2 August 1992. If Saddam tried to launch any attack, he would face coalition air power and ground troops.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Guney, p. 345.

⁷⁸ Sabri Sayari, “Turkey and the Middle East in the 1990s,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 26, No.3, (Spring 1997), p.45.

⁷⁹ Sabri Sayari, “Turkey and the Middle East in the 1990s,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 26, No.3, (Spring 1997), p.45.

⁸⁰ Mustafa Aydin and Cagri Erhan, *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present, and Future* (London: Routledge, 2003), 157.

⁸¹ Hale, *Turkey...*, p. 688.

Therefore, the Incirlik air base became crucial for the patrol of the no-fly zone north of the 36th parallel. The PKK exploited the collapse of Saddam's power in northern Iraq, as well as the availability of arms from retreating Iraqi troops. On 4 August, PKK terrorists attacked a gendarmerie post in Hakkari, killing nine Turkish soldiers and abducting seven of their comrades to PKK bases in Iraq as the beginning of their bloody campaign.⁸² Additionally in 1992, there were some developments in northern Iraq that resembled the rudiments of a de facto state formation similar to the legislative elections.

During that period, many in Turkey voiced suspicions about the motivations of its Western allies, including the United States, who backed these developments.⁸³

The economy of Turkey was another concern because the First Gulf War caused great economic losses for Turkey, including oil prices, land transportation, disruption of the construction sector, tourism sector and exports. Added to that, Turkey had to find an extra oil resource because of the closure of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline.⁸⁴

In the post cold war era, like the First Gulf War proved, the predictions for a peaceful and prosperous new world order were too optimistic. Although the threat of an all-out war between the superpowers has decreased since the end of the Cold War, new and potentially more explosive problems have emerged. Among them, one can see a flare-up in ethnic tensions with a tendency for violent irredentism that has swept through much of the Balkans and the Caucasus with potentially disastrous consequences for the entire region. Other risks and threats take the form of terrorism, religious fanaticism, rapid population growth in the developing countries, Also, pollution on a global scale, increased racism and xenophobia have all gained ground.

⁸² Hale, *Turkey...*, p. 689.

⁸³ Aydin and Erhan, p. 159.

⁸⁴ Mustafa Gulec and Gencay Oguz, "Irak Savaşının Gölgesinde Türkiye Ortadoğu Ülkeleri Ticari İlişkileri," *Ekonomik Araştırmalar ve Değerlendirme Genel Mudurluğu*, Mayıs 2003, p. 7 <http://www.dtm.gov.tr/dtmadmin/upload/EAD/KonjokturIzlemeDb/Irak%20Savasinin%20Golgesinde.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2007).

In line with this new environment, Turkish-US relations have also changed. A new concept called the enhanced partnership was introduced in 1991. This new concept was aimed at diversifying and deepening the Turkish-American relationship as well as developing it on a more substantial basis.⁸⁵

Meanwhile, for a short period of time, the Erbakan Administration, in a coalition with the liberal True Path Party (TPP), came into power in the mid 1990s.⁸⁶ This new administration was not in favor of expanding relations either with America or with Western countries. While the new prime minister was paying a number of consecutive visits and trying to bind Turkey to Developing-8 (D-8) countries, he insistently rejected visiting the United States of America during his administration.⁸⁷ However, his government collapsed after a short period of time.

Turkey, during the 1990s, made many international attempts to sustain peace and stability worldwide and sent troops to more than thirty points on the globe. Turkey sent three hundred troops into Somalia under the UNOSOM II (United Nations Operation in Somalia) command in 1993 and has, for some time since then, taken command of this peace force. Due to its historical ties, Turkey sent fourteen hundred troops to help its Bosnian friends under UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) command in 1993. These troops worked also under the IFOR (Implementation Force) command. Kosovo was another crisis in which Turkey and U.S. forces worked together under NATO command. Turkey contributed to the NATO air operation with twenty-one planes including F-16s and KC-135s in 1999.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Turkey and U.S.
http://www.turkishembassy.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=510&Itemid=490, (accessed March 1, 2007).

⁸⁶ The general election in 1995 resulted in a coalition government led by Welfare Party with the right-wing True Path Party. Necmettin Erbakan was appointed as prime minister in June 1996 and the coalition government collapsed in June 1997.

⁸⁷ Mehran Kamrava, *The Modern Middle East: The Political History Since The First World War* (California:University of California Press, 2005), 311.

⁸⁸ Uluslararası Barışa Katkı ve Destekler
<http://www.tsk.mil.tr/uluslararasi/barisidestekharekatkatki/barisdestekkatki.htm> (accessed March 1, 2007).

In 1997, Turkey and the United States specified five primary topics of mutual interest, which became known as the Five Topics Agenda. These topics included energy, economy and trade, regional cooperation, Cyprus and defense issues and security. This was in response to the US Secretary of Commerce's designation of Turkey as an emerging market among the big ten emerging markets.⁸⁹ It was clear that Turkey would have an important role in American trade and investment strategies in the new millennium.

In December 1998, after the United States and Britain executed the Desert Fox Operation in Iraq to demolish weapons, a disagreement emerged between the U.S. and Turkey. Turkish authorities argued that America had not sought Turkey's approval before the operation.⁹⁰ In order to stop any possible refugee flow, Turkey closed the Habur border gate. The Turkish General Chief of Staff and his U.S. counterpart came together on February 22, 1999, to make some alterations in the Document of Engagement Rules, which had been signed by the military authorities of Turkey, the United States, and Britain earlier, in order to obligate the U.S. for prior consultation with Turkey in terms of these kinds of operations.

In late 1998, Turkish-American decision makers cooperated on the the European Security and Defense Policy Initiative subject, which has distorted the Turkish EU aspiration. The ESDI has been the topic as the United States has supported the European countries while preserving its own concerns because of NATO. In December 1998, Britain and France signed the St. Malo Declaration. According to this declaration, the European Union (EU) would take its decisions about the subjects with respect to its own security and could automatically benefit from NATO's planning and operational facilities without asking for other non-EU

⁸⁹ Mahmood Monshipouri, "Exploring the Dynamics of Human Rights and Reform: Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey," in *Human Rights and Societies in Transition: Causes, Consequences, Responses*, ed. Shale Asher Horowitz and Albrecht Schnabel (US: United Nations University Press, 2004), 219.

⁹⁰ Ian O. Lesser, *NATO Looks South: New Challenges and New Strategies in the Mediterranean* (Rand Corporation, 2000), p. 41
http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1126/ (accessed March 1, 2007).

members of NATO, like Turkey. In this context, Turkey was excluded from consultation and decision mechanisms; however, Turkey has asserted its veto power to impede this kind of automatic mechanism. This question remains to be solved at a future date.⁹¹

Another cooperation between Turkish-American decision makers came in 1999. The capture of the bloody terrorist leader Abdullah Ocalan in Kenya through Turkish-U.S. intelligence cooperation is one of the most important events in 1999. Turkish public opinion was very positive due to this cooperation, in terms of bilateral relations. However, the Turkish Prime Minister later commented that he could not understand the real intentions of the U.S. in this cooperation.⁹²

In addition to this, visits between top officials during 1999 accelerated bilateral relations. In April, Turkish President Suleyman Demirel visited the United States for NATO Summit. In September, Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit visited the United States in the aftermath of the Golcuk Earthquake which killed thousands in Turkey. In November, U.S. President Bill Clinton visited Turkey, addressing the Turkish Grand National Assembly. These visits strengthened the strategic nature of the relationship, which has been termed a strategic partnership as of September 1999, meaning that strategic cooperation is multi-dimensional and multi-faceted and involves a wide range of overlapping interests in Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East.⁹³

⁹¹ Isyar, p. 35.

⁹² ABD Apo'yu niye verdi, meçul, *Sabah* <http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2005/04/13/gnd101.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

⁹³ Isyar, p. 36.

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III. RELATIONS IN THE AFTERMATH OF 9/11

The Turkish-American relationship has been considered a strategic partnership by both nations since U.S. President Bill Clinton used the term in reference to the bilateral relations in his address at the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1999. During this visit, Turkey and the United States also signed an agreement that laid down the foundation of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline project that both countries had envisioned and consulted over for years.⁹⁴ The European Union, with the U.S.'s full support, recognized Turkey as a candidate country on December 11, 1999, at the end of Helsinki Summit.

The year 2000 was important for both countries primarily for domestic reasons. The United States would elect its new president and Turkish President Suleyman Demirel's presidential term would end; however, both countries increased diplomatic endeavors on the international scene, especially in regard to the Palestine-Israel problem. As a hopeful step toward the peace process, Israel withdrew from south Lebanon. In this context, the Camp David Summit was convened in July, but unfortunately, this summit ended fruitlessly.

The terrorism issue has also never been off the agenda in Turkey, just as it has not for the U.S. after September 11. Turkey began the year with a heavy strike on the Hizbullah (The Party of God) terrorist organization by killing its leader Huseyin Velioglu and capturing many others.⁹⁵ The operations against Hizbullah's cells continued during the year.

The capturing of its leader in 1999 by the Turkish-American cooperation had a deep impact on the PKK-KONGRA GEL. On the leadership level, the terrorist organization was divided. Osman Ocalan, Abdullah Ocalan's brother, disagreed with the main group of the terrorist organization. In this situation, the

⁹⁴ Isyar, p. 36.

⁹⁵ Ersel Aydinli, "Implications of Turkey's Anti-Hizbullah Operation," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, PolicyWatch. 439 (2000), p.1, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=1317> (accessed March 1, 2007).

organization led by Murat Karayilan had continued to station itself in northern Iraq but it did not have any successful terrorist attacks in 2000.

The European Security and Defense Initiative issue was brought up in the NATO Council of Ministers Meeting on May 24. Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Cem restated Turkey's view toward the ESDI and declared that Turkey was disappointed about the draft text that would be submitted by the EU on June 13, 2000.⁹⁶ The following day, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Cem met and talked about Turkey–Greece relations, the Cyprus issue and the ESDI.⁹⁷ Secretary Albright reaffirmed the United States' opinion that Turkey could not be excluded in the security architecture of Europe. Unfortunately, Turkey's concerns were not met during this summit.

In September, Turkish President Ahmed Necdet Sezer and U.S. President Bill Clinton met during the U.N. Summit in New York. In this meeting, the Turkish President stated that Turkey was expecting that the Armenian Resolution in the U.S. Congress would not pass. Therefore, this resolution was not put on the U.S. Congress' agenda due to the Clinton administration's successful press to Congress.

In late November, Turkey had a financial crisis.⁹⁸ The IMF (International Monetary Fund) did not lend the money it had pledged to Turkey according to stand-by agreements before the crisis took place.⁹⁹ It was apparent that Turkey had not recovered from the devastating effect of the 1999 Golcuk earthquake. In collaboration with the Clinton administration, Turkey was able to satisfy IMF demands and reach an agreement for new credit support that generated \$10 billion dollars.

⁹⁶ Huseyin Bagci, "Turkey and the European Security and Defense Identity – A Turkish View," p. 6, http://www.bmlv.gv.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/09_ega_01_tes.pdf (accessed March 1, 2007).

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ercan Uygur, "Krizden Krize Türkiye: 2000 Kasım ve 2001 Şubat Krizleri," p. 6, <http://www.econturk.org/Turkiyeekonomisi/krizdenkrize.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2007).

⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 17.

An economic crisis took hold of Turkey again in 2001. In the meantime, the Bush administration took charge of Washington, with no change in policy toward Turkey's economic woes. The United States supported Turkey during its negotiations with the World Bank and the IMF.¹⁰⁰ The Turkish-American bilateral relations were further enhanced by Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Cem's visit to Washington in March 2001 where both parties shared their views on issues such as the ESDI and the Palestine-Israeli conflict.¹⁰¹ Consequently, it appeared that bilateral relations would be preserved, despite an administration change in Washington.

Because Turkey as a country had combated PKK-KONGRA GEL terrorism since the 1980s, it condemned the September 11 terrorist attacks against the United States, declaring its decision to continue the battle against terrorism, and pledged its support.¹⁰²

In response to the September 11 attacks, the United States decided to catch Al Qaeda leaders and destroy their camps in Afghanistan. Turkey opened its airspace for flights in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and allowed the use of Incirlik air base in this framework. The Turkish Administration also dispatched ninety Special Forces personnel to Afghanistan and assigned Turkish personnel to Florida to support the U.S. anti-terror efforts.¹⁰³

Turkey's immediate support evolved from three important agendas. First, the impact of the September 11 attacks also shocked Turkey and Turkey felt responsible to help its ally and strategic partner. Second, terrorism had been a central problem for Turkey for a long time, and Turkey strongly felt that there was no room for any tolerance of terrorism in Turkey or any place in the world. Third,

¹⁰⁰ Yakup Beris And Asli Gurkan, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerine Bakis: Ana Temalar ve Guncel Gelismeler," TUSIAD Washington Office (June 2002), p. 39
http://www.tusiad.us/Content/uploaded/TURKIYE-ABD_ILISKILERI-UPDATE2.PDF (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁰¹ Rachel Prager, "Turkish American Relations: Historical Context and Current Issues," *Georgetown University*, 2003, p. 10,
<http://www.tusiad.us/content/uploaded/Prageltusiadsubmission.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁰² Isyar, p. 37.

¹⁰³ Prager, p. 11.

it was a great opportunity for Turkey and the United States to collaborate and cooperate. Turkey had already had a large amount of experience in this matter and was ready and willing to share the lessons it had learned. And, hopefully, such cooperation would move Washington to support Ankara in its struggle against the PKK-KONGRA GEL.

The September 11 attacks altered the Bush administration's foreign policy agenda. According to the new agenda, the axis of evil and Al Qaeda are the enemies of the United States. Terrorism had become a primary problem for the United States; thus President Bush declared a Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).¹⁰⁴ Consequently, Turkish-American bilateral relations had now become measured in terms of how much Turkey could/would contribute to the GWOT. For this reason, it could be said that the newly emerging U.S. GWOT policy narrowed the Turkish-American relationship into the area of security.

¹⁰⁴ On This Day, 2001: US declares war on terror, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/september/12/newsid_2515000/2515239.stm (accessed March 1, 2007).

IV. THE INVASION OF IRAQ

A. THE U.S. NORTHERN FRONT REQUEST

Iraq had become the dominant issue in the Turkish-American relationship after 2002 because of the United States' discomfort over the Saddam regime. Beginning with the visit of Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit to Washington on January 16, 2002, the United States shared its view with Turkey and waited for the Turkish response to this issue.¹⁰⁵ From the very beginning, Turkey emphasized that the territorial integrity of Iraq must be protected.

Washington shared its intentions regarding Iraq with the rest of the world through U.S. President Bush's speech on January 29, 2002, where he referred to Iraq as one of the countries in the axis of evil.¹⁰⁶ Turkey had shown its commitment to bilateral relations with the United States by taking command of the ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) in Afghanistan on June 20, 2002. Less than a month later, Washington gathered Iraqi opposition group leaders,¹⁰⁷ and Russian Assistant Foreign Minister Sultanov visited Ankara asking Turkey to act against the U.S.'s imminent military action.¹⁰⁸

U.S. Undersecretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz, conveyed the first U.S. demands to Ankara in relation to Iraq on July 16, 2002, during his visit to Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit. Wolfowitz said that Washington hoped to see Ankara's support during the Iraqi operation as an ally. In response, Ecevit reiterated Ankara's opinion of the territorial integrity of Iraq, the future of northern Iraq and the security of Turcoman.¹⁰⁹ It was also written that the United States and

¹⁰⁵ Isyar, p. 38.

¹⁰⁶ Bush State of the Union address, CNN.com/Insidepolitics
<http://archives.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/01/29/bush.speech.txt/> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁰⁷ Isyar, p. 38.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ BYGEM, 2002 Temmuz
<http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/AyinTarihi/2002/temmuz2002.htm> (accessed March 1, 2007).

Turkey would form a special channel, and Turkey would allow the passing of the U.S. Special Forces into northern Iraq accompanied by the Turkish Special Forces.¹¹⁰

Turkish President Sezer and U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell met during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg on September 4, 2002. Turkish President Sezer again reinforced the position that any operation in Iraq needed international legitimacy.¹¹¹ The United States and Turkey signed an economic aid agreement totaling \$200 million on September 17, 2002. While the Bush administration was seeking approval from Congress in order to use military force in Iraq, Turkey continued consultations with other countries, including Iraq, in order to find ways to avoid the war. On October 15, 2002, the U.S. delegation, headed by the U.S. Undersecretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz, gave a briefing to the Turkish administration and Turkish General Staff (TGS) explaining the American plan for Iraq and Turkey's place in it.¹¹² According to the eighteen-page document, the United States' demands were:¹¹³

1. Allowing pre-deployment site surveys.
2. Approval of the NILE (Northern Iraq Liaison Element) Teams.
3. The stationing of 80,000 U.S. troops and 250 fighter planes in Turkey.
4. The use of six main and eight supplementary airfields, plus two main and three supplementary ports in Turkey.
5. Permission to use all Turkish lands for logistical support and unrestricted overflight.

¹¹⁰ Fikret Bila, "ABD, gizli kanaldan geçiş izni istedi," *Milliyet* (September 18, 2003).

¹¹¹ BYGEM, 2002 Eylül
<http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/AyinTarihi/2002/EYLUL2002.htm> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹¹² Mustafa Balbay, *Irak Batakliginda Turk-Amerikan Iliskileri* (Istanbul: Cumhuriyet Kitaplari, fourth edition, 2007), p. 11.

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 434 and Isyar, p. 38.

In this briefing, the U.S. delegation also stressed these issues:

1. A unified Iraq with territorial integrity (no Kurdish state).
2. Equal treatment of all major ethnic groups (including Turcoman).
3. Oil resources (i.e. Kirkuk) under control of a central government representative of the entire population.

It appears from these points that the United States has been aware of major Turkish concerns in terms of Iraq. The issue of the PKK-KONGRA-GEL was never mentioned throughout the briefing. In addition, the timeline of Turkish permission for logistical support and unrestricted overflight was also never mentioned throughout the briefing. However, during this critical period, Turkey had different concerns on its domestic scene. There was a general election on November 3, 2002, in Turkey. After the elections, the chief of the TGS, General Hilmi Ozkok, visited his counterpart, General Richard Myers, in Washington. He also met with U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his assistant, Paul Wolfowitz. At the press conference, he stated Turkish concerns about the U.S. plans:¹¹⁴

1. The international legitimacy of the operation.
2. The compensation for Turkish losses after the previous Gulf War and from the upcoming war.
3. The future of Iraq and especially northern Iraq.

In the meantime, the Turkish elections were finished, and the AKP (Justice and Development Party) had won. It was understood that the United States would repeat the talks and negotiations regarding the Northern Front with the newly elected Turkish administration. Thus, Wolfowitz and Grossman made another visit to Turkey on 3 December. They met with the newly elected Turkish

¹¹⁴ Balbay, p. 35.

Prime Minister, Abdullah Gul, and the head of the AKP Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who accepted U.S. requests to begin reconnaissance and construction of new facilities in Turkish bases and airports. As Aylin Guney relates, it is notable that the level of U.S. expectations from Turkey can best be understood by the following words of Paul Wolfowitz:¹¹⁵

It involves not only the use of bases, but also possibly the use of land routes, the airspace, and questions, too, possibly about a role of Turkish forces. The United States is not in a position to make specific requests, and obviously, the Turkish Government is not in a position to give us specific answers. What is worth emphasizing is that I think we can count on the fact that Turkey will be with us. That is the important point.

In this context, Erdogan visited Bush on December 11, 2002. After these meetings, there was a wide range of speculation, rumors and news about the U.S. demands on Turkey in the Turkish press. According to one legitimate newspaper article, the United States wanted to station 250,000 troops in Turkey and use Turkey as a logistical base, while promising to grant the international legitimacy of the operation, erasing Turkey's military debts of up to six billion dollars, giving Turkey a share of Kirkuk's oil revenue and granting Turkey some say on the future of northern Iraq.¹¹⁶ The activity between the two countries could be observed on the Turkish-Iraqi border. Each day, as many as fifty trucks carrying U.S. military material, headed to northern Iraq.

The pitfall of the negotiations, until December 13, was the EU Copenhagen Summit as Turkey was domestically and internationally preoccupied with the Copenhagen Summit's possible decision that could begin accession talks between the EU and Turkey. Turkey focused on negotiations with the U.S. after the summit ended. On December 18, 2002, the Gul administration allowed U.S. authorities to complete an inspection of Turkish air bases for

¹¹⁵ Guney, p. 347.

¹¹⁶ Balbay, pp. 48-49.

modernization.¹¹⁷ The announcement of the Turkish presidency regarding Iraq on January 3 can be summed up as follows:¹¹⁸

War in Iraq is a last resort. There is still hope for a peaceful solution. In order to start a war, there must be international legitimacy. UN Resolution 1441 would not approve a military action. Turkey has red lines in terms of Iraq. These are the territorial and political integrity of Iraq, and the future of Mosul and Kirkuk.

As understood from the announcement, Turkey assumed that the war could be prevented. Thus, the following day, Turkish Prime Minister Gul started a regional tour that took him to Syria, Egypt, and Jordan and later to Saudi Arabia and Iran. In the meantime, the U.S. started its inspection of the Turkish bases and ports. Turkey emphasized clearly that the military action would need a UN Resolution and this was the requirement for broader Turkish support to visiting U.S. General Myers on January 19.¹¹⁹ In response to the Turkish position, General Myers stated that the United States would start the war with or without Turkey.¹²⁰ On January 23, the foreign ministers of the Middle East states gathered in Istanbul as a consequence of Turkish Prime Minister Gul's regional tour. At the end of the meeting, all states announced their desire for a peaceful solution in Iraq.¹²¹

On January 31, the Turkish National Security Council convened for six and a half hours. The necessity for taking military measures was emphasized and it was recommended that the government should be ready to ask for permission from the parliament.¹²² According to the Turkish Constitution, the Administration should seek parliamentary approval in order to station foreign

¹¹⁷ Isyar, p. 39.

¹¹⁸ Balbay, p. 56.

¹¹⁹ Balbay, p. 63

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Serhat Oguz, "Zirveden Irak'a uyari," *Milliyet*, January 24, 2003, <http://www.milliyet.com/2003/01/24/guncel/gun00a.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹²² Balbay, p. 66.

troops on Turkish soil. Moreover, according to the Turkish Constitution, if these foreign troops attacked another country from Turkish soil, international legitimacy would be needed for this situation. After this date, the Gul Administration gave up its attempts for a peaceful solution and focused more on negotiations with Washington. According to Gul, Turkey did its best to stop the war; however, all attempts proved fruitless and now it was time to think about what was best for Turkey.¹²³ In light of this, on February 6, the TGNA accepted Turkish Prime Minister Gul's request for permission to station U.S. technical and military personnel for three months in order to modernize the Turkish bases and ports — by a majority of votes.¹²⁴

However, there were some restrictions on Turkey's desire to cooperate with America. Due to France and Germany's declaration of their opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq,¹²⁵ Turkey did not want to jeopardize its candidacy for the EU by its partnership with Washington on the pending war in Iraq. Thus, it can be understood that transatlantic relations had narrowed Ankara's flexibility. Not only was international and domestic public opposition to war very high, but Turkish polls indicated that the great majority of the Turkish people (77.8 percent) thought that Turkey should oppose the war and not help the United States in any way — neither offering its military forces nor allowing the use of its military bases.¹²⁶ As a result, Turkish decision makers lacked moral and popular grounds for the impending war while arguing their concern for protecting Turkey's relationship with the United States. In the end, Turkish economic concerns about the war and economic negotiations with the United States sometimes took place in a humiliating manner in both the international and domestic media. For

¹²³ Balbay, p. 79.

¹²⁴ Irak tezkeresi AKP'yi catlattı, *Milliyet*
<http://www.milliyet.com/2003/02/07/guncel/agun.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹²⁵ ABD ve Fransalmanya arasinda Irak dalasi, *Milliyet*
<http://www.milliyet.com/2003/01/24/dunya/adun.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹²⁶ Nasuh Uslu et al., "Turkish public opinion toward the United States in the context of the Iraq question," *The Middle East Review of International Affairs* 9, No. 3 (2005), http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2005/issue3/jv9no3a5.html#_ednref18.

instance, William Safire wrote in the *New York Times*, “an alliance with a price tag is no alliance at all” — referring to the negotiations between Turkey and the U.S.¹²⁷ On the other hand, the first Gulf War cost Turkey more than 100 billion dollars. With this experience, it was hard for Turkey not to bring up economic issues at the negotiation table.

In addition to the emotionally-charged opinions over how to handle this latest crisis, there were disagreements between Washington and Ankara during the negotiations regarding the military, economic, and political fields. First, while the United States wanted to preserve general command over all troops, Turkey insisted on commanding its own troops. This issue was resolved with a close coordination formula. Second, while the United States offered a 6 billion dollar package, Turkey asked for a 25 billion dollar package, which was to span five years. Third, while Turkey wanted to sign an agreement on the future of Iraq, the United States wanted to rely on its word from Turkey.¹²⁸

Without reaching a consensus on these issues, the motion that would allow the United States to deploy sixty-two thousand troops, two hundred fifty-five planes, and sixty-five helicopters for six months in Turkey was tabled in the TGNA on March 1, 2003. The result was: two hundred sixty-four in favor, two hundred fifty-one against, with nineteen abstentions. Although it had achieved the majority, the vote had failed to reach the overall majority that was necessary for it to pass. The motion failed by three votes.¹²⁹

B. THE U.S. INVASION OF IRAQ

On March 2, the Turkish administration announced that nothing had been finalized and signaled that they would try to prepare a second motion. However, the second motion had not come before parliament by March 15 when U.S.

¹²⁷ William Safire, “The Northern Front,” *New York Times*, January 16, 2003, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9D0DE0DF1131F935A25752C0A9659C8B63&n=Top/Reference/Times%20Topics/People/H/Hussein,%20Saddam> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹²⁸ Balbay, pp. 132-133.

¹²⁹ Guney, p. 350.

Secretary of State Colin Powell announced that the negotiations with Turkey were not valid, and the United States would continue by itself.¹³⁰In return, the motion that was accepted on March 20 only allowed the Turkish administration to dispatch Turkish troops to northern Iraq and to allow for the use of Turkish airspace by the foreign country for six months.¹³¹

It can be argued that the TGNA's decision on March 1 was a reflection and a combination of these factors:

1. Absence of international legitimacy for military action towards Iraq.
2. Turkey's infamous experience in the first Gulf War.
3. Turkey's unmet demands about the future of Iraq and the economic aid package.
4. Opposition to war domestically and internationally.
5. Washington's coercive behavior toward Turkey.
6. Middle East countries', France and Germany's opposition to war.

Washington, concerned with Turkey's possible military action into northern Iraq after the U.S. invasion started on March 20, was still without a northern front. On March 23, U.S. President Bush stated that:¹³²

We have got more troops up north, and we're making it very clear to the Turks that we expect them not to come into Northern Iraq...and they know we're working with the Kurds to make sure there's not an incident that would cause there to be an excuse to go into Northern Iraq.

On the other hand, the chief of TGS General Ozkok gave a press conference on March 26, and there he emphasized that:¹³³

¹³⁰ Balbay, p. 197.

¹³¹ Balbay, p. 208.

¹³² President Discusses Military Operation, The White House
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030323-1.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹³³ Türkiye ve Irak Operasyonu, *BELGE.net*
http://www.belgenet.com/2003/ozkok_260303.html (accessed March 1, 2007).

It is hard for Turkey to understand those who would perceive threats from across the ocean but do not accept when Turkey perceives threat from its own borders.

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan wrote an article in the Wall Street Journal on April 1 to warm the relations, and U.S. Secretary of State Powell visited Ankara on the following day to ask for Ankara's support for the Iraqi invasion. Ankara increased its logistical support after this visit.¹³⁴ U.S. President Bush declared that the major combat operations ended on May 1.¹³⁵

In the days and weeks that followed, the bilateral relations between the U.S. and Turkey suffered greatly as a result of Paul Wolfowitz's statement that Turkey should apologize to the United States for denying the U.S. northern front request; however, he later withdrew his statement.¹³⁶ The main incident that shook the bilateral relations, later to become known as the hood event, took place in a Turkish Special Forces camp in Sulaymaniyah, a city in northern Iraq, on July 4, 2003. There, eleven Turkish soldiers were taken as detainees by the U.S. forces on charges that they were conspiring to assassinate elected officials there. After sixty hours, the Turkish soldiers were returned to Sulaymaniyah. Nevertheless, the impact of the event, especially to the Turkish public, was tremendous and was described by General Ozkok as the largest crisis of confidence — ever— between the two countries.¹³⁷

Turkish Foreign Minister Gul visited the United States on March 22, and after that time, Turkey's possible troop contribution in Iraq became debatable

¹³⁴ Balbay, p. 229.

¹³⁵ President Bush Announces Major Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended, The White House <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030501-15.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹³⁶ Balbay, p. 244 and Wolfowitz Ozur Istememis, *Aksam* <http://www.aksam.com.tr/arsiv/aksam/2003/05/14/politika/politika9.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹³⁷ Onurumuz onarin, *Aksam* <http://www.aksam.com.tr/arsiv/aksam/2003/07/08/politika/politika1.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

upon U.S. request. In the economic field, Turkey and the United States signed an agreement that provided for an 8.5 billion dollar credit for Turkey in late September.¹³⁸ Moreover, upon Washington's troop request, the Turkish administration prepared a motion for TGNA's voting on October 7. The motion passed, but on November 6 Washington expressed that there was no need for Turkish troops.¹³⁹ Inexplicably, Bush, in a discussion about the November 15 terrorist bombing that took place in Istanbul, referred to Turkey as a front country in the Global War on Terror.¹⁴⁰ The terrorists claimed their relation with Al Qaeda at the end of the investigations by the Turkish police.¹⁴¹ It can be argued that the bilateral relations gained positive momentum after the terrorist attacks in Istanbul; however, it was too early to say that the relationship had fully recovered in late 2003.

C. THE AFTERMATH OF THE INVASION

The year 2004 started with quite a positive atmosphere for the bilateral relations. In January, the U.S. designated the PKK/KONGRA-GEL and its affiliates a terrorist organization. The Bush administration began to focus on the Greater Middle East and the North African Initiative, and Turkey was considered a core country in this regard.¹⁴² In line with this view, the NATO Summit was held in Istanbul, and President Bush declared that Turkey was vitally important for the cultivation of peace in Europe and the Middle East.¹⁴³

¹³⁸ 8.5 milyar dolarlık imza, Radikal http://www.radikal.com.tr/veriler/2003/09/23/haber_89652.php (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹³⁹ Balbay, p. 423.

¹⁴⁰ President Condemns Terrorist Attacks in Turkey, U.S. Department of State <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2003/26558.htm> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁴¹ Karl Vick, "Al-Qaeda's Hand In Istanbul Plot," The Washington Post <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/12/AR2007021201715.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁴² R. Nicholas Burns, "The New NATO and the Greater Middle East," U.S. Department of State <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2003/25602.htm> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁴³ President Bush Discusses Democracy, Freedom from Turkey, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/06/20040629-4.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

This period of time also witnessed increasing Turkish-American cooperation in relation to Iraq. Many Turkish companies took part in the reconstruction of Iraq after the war, allowing much aid and assistance to pass through the Turkish-Iraq border.

This recovery period of the Turkish-American relations happened mainly through reciprocal visits. As R. Nicholas Burns commented, "Turkey and the U.S. have turned the corner at the end of this period."¹⁴⁴ In February 2005, The U.S. secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, visited Turkey to discuss a contemporary agenda. Following this visit, on 13 February, Turkey took command of ISAF in Afghanistan.

Acting on U.S. demands, the Turkish administration prepared a request from the Turkish Grand National Assembly that would allow the U.S. to use Incirlik air base in Turkey as a logistics hub for the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. This request was passed by the parliament, but the motion restricted the transport of any weapons.

In June 2005, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan met with President Bush in Washington. After the meeting, Bush used the term strategic relations in order to describe the warming bilateral relations, showing that the bilateral relations had improved significantly.

On the other hand, on 16 July 2005, five tourists died because of a bomb attack by the PKK/KONGRA-GEL in Kusadasi. This was the first PKK/KONGRA-GEL attack after nearly a year of inaction. In the years following, the PKK/KONGRA-GEL terrorist activities have increased and become a central matter on the bilateral agenda.

Since 2003, Washington's concern had been Turkey's increasing relations with Tehran and Damascus. Turkish President Sezer met with Syrian President Assad in April 2005, in Damascus, to return Assad's visit to Ankara in 2004. The U.S. ambassador, Edelman, expressed U.S. discomfort with this visit.

¹⁴⁴ R. Nicholas Burns, "The Future of the U.S.-Turkey Relationship" (remarks at the Atlantic Council, Washington, USA, September 13, 2007).

In December 2006, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan met with Iranian President Ahmadinejad in Tehran. Following this visit, in June 2007, the two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding that concerned an energy agreement. With this agreement, Turkey guaranteed to produce natural gas in Iran and a thirty billion cubic meter natural gas purchase per year. Although Umut Arik, a former Turkish ambassador, has rightly remarked that Turkey was taking proactive steps to mediate between its friends and neighbors,¹⁴⁵ R. Nicolas Burns, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, states that Washington was troubled by Turkey's cooperative stance with Iran.¹⁴⁶ Although relations continued to improve, the critical issues of Iran, Syria, PKK/KONGRA_GEL and Iraq proved to create problems between the U.S. and Turkey that impacted continuing bilateral agendas and agreements.

¹⁴⁵ Oleg Svet, "Turkey's Zero Problem Foreign Policy: An Untenable Balancing Act," *NIMEP Insights* II, Vol. II (Spring 2006), p. 74.

¹⁴⁶ R. Nicholas Burns, "The Future of the U.S.-Turkey Relationship" (remarks at the Atlantic Council, Washington, USA, September 13, 2007).

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. CONCLUSION

For nearly sixty years, Turkey and the U.S. have developed a relationship with ups and downs, sometimes referred to as a strategic partnership and sometimes as an alliance. The two countries have signed nearly two hundred agreements throughout these years.¹⁴⁷ However, events following the September 11 attacks showed that the parameters of the bilateral relations have changed significantly. Today, it is hard to say what the common purpose of the relationship is — in contrast to what it was during the Cold War. After the September 11 attacks, Turkish decision makers assumed that fighting against terrorism could be the common purpose of the relationship. However, the March 1, 2003, decision of the TGNA and U.S. inaction toward the PKK have muddled this assumption, although Turkey has provided critical support to the U.S. both during and after the invasion of Iraq. In Afghanistan, Turkey has commanded the ISAF twice, participated in reconstruction efforts and shared joint rotational command of ISAF with France and Italy.

In short, after September 11, it can be argued that the main pillars of the relationship emerged as: peace, democracy, free market, freedom, and prosperity. This set of broad terms is relative, however. The relationship needs more examination and definition. It can be expected that relations will be closer when both countries' policies match, but will be tougher when the countries' policies contradict. Washington and Turkey should not expect the same cohesion in their partnership that they once had in the Cold War period.

Moreover, as Kemal Koprulu argues, there has been a confidence problem between the two countries during the last decades.¹⁴⁸ Consequently, we see that Turkish public opinion is 83 percent unfavorable to the U.S. and 91

¹⁴⁷ Mehmet Dulger, "Taking a closer look at Turkish-American relations," *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 4, No.1, Spring 2005, p. 1

¹⁴⁸ Koprulu, p. 10.

percent opposed to the GWOT.¹⁴⁹ In order to understand the reasoning behind the Turkish public opinion of the U.S., the following arguments are offered.

1. PKK/KONGRA-GEL

PKK/KONGRA-GEL exploited the power vacuum in northern Iraq after 1991. Turkish forces with cross border operations executed more than a hundred cross-border operations from 1992–1997 against them.¹⁵⁰ In 1999, the capture of its leader impacted the terrorist organization deeply, and the PKK/KONGRA-GEL withdrew to the inner parts of Iraq — mainly the Qandil Mountain region. In the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the terrorist organization got stronger, buying new weapons and bombs that cost as much as 5.5 million euros.¹⁵¹ The terrorist organization broke its so-called unilateral cease-fire in June 2004.¹⁵² Thus, terrorist activities resumed their 1990s levels. General Yasar Buyukanit's remark that the C-4, a powerful explosive, had become an indispensable component of terrorists' backpacks fits well in terms of terrorist activities in those years.¹⁵³

Turkish suspicions about U.S. motives toward PKK/KONGRA-GEL grew as the U.S. continued to ignore the fact that the terrorist organization had increased its bloody activities in Turkey. However, after the invasion of Iraq, U.S. authorities wanted the Turks to leave the PKK/KONGRA-GEL problem to them.¹⁵⁴ Contradictorily, the arms that had been seized from the terrorist

¹⁴⁹ Global Unease with Major World Powers, "The Pew Global Attitudes Project," The Pew Research Center (June 2007) <http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/256.pdf> (accessed August 1, 2007).

¹⁵⁰ Umit Ozdag, "Kerkuk Krizi ve Türkiye'nin Irak Politikası," *21. Yüzyıl Türkiye Enstitüsü, Stratejik Öngörü*.1, January 15, 2007, p. 8.

¹⁵¹ Kemal Yavuz, "Türkiye'ye 'tekrar' terör kartı," *Aksam* <http://www.aksam.com.tr/arsiv/aksam/2003/05/28/yazarlar/yazarlar156.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁵² Eligur, p. 6.

¹⁵³ Saddam'ın C-4'leri şimdi PKK'da, *Milliyet* <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2005/05/14/guncel/gun03.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁵⁴ Kemal Yavuz, "Türkiye'ye 'tekrar' terör kartı," *Aksam* <http://www.aksam.com.tr/arsiv/aksam/2003/05/28/yazarlar/yazarlar156.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

organization appear to belong to the U.S.,¹⁵⁵ even though the United States declared that Washington had no policy to arm the terrorist organization — while accepting that they were U.S. arms.¹⁵⁶ In addition to this, arrested PKK/KONGRA-GEL terrorists claimed that U.S. officers visited the terrorists' camps in the Qandil Mountains many times and brought money, arms, and talked with the current leader of the terrorist organization.¹⁵⁷ The existence of the helicopter-landing zone in the terrorist organization's camp was introduced as proof to their claims because only the U.S. had helicopters in the region.

More than forty thousand Turkish people lost their lives because of PKK/KONGRA-GEL's bloody campaign.¹⁵⁸ The terrorist organization has condensed its activities in the last two years. The mechanism, which was set up by the U.S. and Turkey to counter PKK/KONGRA-GEL terrorism, also proved to be fruitless; thus, both generals quit their jobs after one year.¹⁵⁹ In addition to all of these efforts to counter terrorism with the aid of the U.S., Turkey signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Iraq on August 7. In this document, the Iraqi government promised to eliminate PKK/KONGRA-GEL and its affiliations in Iraq.¹⁶⁰

Turkey had patiently waited for its respondents to act while almost every day Turkish people were losing their lives to terrorism. The inaction of both the U.S. and Iraqi governments finally forced Turkey to take the initiative itself. This

¹⁵⁵ Turkey: US arms end up in Kurdish hands, USA TODAY http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2007-07-11-2735251025_x.htm (accessed August 1, 2007).

¹⁵⁶ Andrew McGregor, "PKK Arms Scandal Fuels Turkish Suspicions," Terrorism Focus IV, No.27 (August 2007), p. 4. http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/uploads/TF_004_027.pdf (accessed September 1, 2007).

¹⁵⁷ Itirafci ifadeleri ABD'de, Milliyet <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2007/11/08/guncel/gun02.html> (accessed September 1, 2007).

¹⁵⁸ Sedat Laciner, "PKK and the Turkish-American Relations," The Journal of Turkish Weekly, (January 9, 2007) <http://www.turkishweekly.net/comments.php?id=2414> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁵⁹ Ralston istifası etti, Hurriyet <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dunya/7394822.asp> (accessed November 1, 2007).

¹⁶⁰ Irak Cumhuriyeti Hukümeti ile Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hukümeti arasında Mutabakat Muhtırası, Disisleri Bakanlığı http://www.mfa.gov.tr/NR/rdonlyres/84C44DE4-4890-4F11-A8F5-485B2296054C/0/Mutabakat_Muhtirasi_Irak.pdf (accessed November 1, 2007).

came in the form of a motion by the Turkish Grand National Assembly on October 17 of this year, allowing the Turkish administration to send troops into Iraq to counter PKK/KONGRA-GEL terrorists.¹⁶¹

However, most recently, a hopeful step for the future of the bilateral relations took place on November 5 during Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's visit to Washington. There, President Bush affirmed that the PKK is a terrorist organization, and that it is an enemy of Turkey; it is an enemy of Iraq, and it is an enemy of the United States.¹⁶²

2. Northern Iraq

After the first Gulf War, a no-fly zone was established over northern Iraq, enabling the Kurds to establish a de facto autonomy.¹⁶³ The objective of this arrangement, in Turkish minds, was to protect the people from Saddam's brutality and to ensure that the refugees could return to their homes safely. The borders of this zone somehow left Turcoman to Saddam's pity. Thus, this zone did not protect Turcoman from Saddam in 1996 when he hanged thirty-five Turcoman leaders.¹⁶⁴

In the absence of Saddam's power, in 1992, a Kurdish parliament was set up, primarily composed of Barzani and Talabani's forces. Meanwhile, Turkey was struggling with the PKK/KONGRA-GEL. In this atmosphere, Turkey established good relations with all the people in northern Iraq against its most significant threat, the PKK/KONGRA-GEL. At the same time, Turkey tried to create a peaceful environment among these groups.

¹⁶¹ Tezkere Meclis'te Kabul edildi, Sabah
<http://www.sabah.com.tr/2007/10/17/haber,7A885B79F5C640689AFAA5A270C9416D.html>
(accessed November 1, 2007).

¹⁶² Bush Pledges Unity with Turkey against PKK, VOA News
<http://www.voanews.com/english/2007-11-06-voa19.cfm> (accessed November 14, 2007).

¹⁶³ Kenneth Katzman and Alfred B. Prados, "The Kurds in Post-Saddam Iraq," *CRS Report for Congress* (June 2007), p. 3.

¹⁶⁴ Aydin Koc, "Kerkuk-Musul-Turkmenler," 21.yuzyil Turkiye Enstitusu (May 2007)
<http://www.21yyte.org/tr/yazdir.aspx?ID=314&kat=18> (accessed August 1, 2007).

Even in 1994, when the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) started to fight with each other, Turkey tried to negotiate with both parties. In 1996, at Turkey's insistence, both parties signed a cease-fire. That same year, the Ankara Process, a diplomatic effort with the aim of consolidating a cease-fire, was initiated.¹⁶⁵ In return, Turkey's influence in the region increased. However, the U.S. brought Barzani and Talabani to Washington to sign an agreement, excluding Turkey from the process.¹⁶⁶ This did much to increase Turkish suspicions about the real intentions of the U.S. in the region.¹⁶⁷

Before the U.S. invasion of Iraq, in spite of Turkey's concern, the U.S. supported the reopening of the Kurdish parliament in October 2002.¹⁶⁸ During the U.S. invasion, the Kurdish forces, Peshmerga, set fire to the population and title records of the Kirkuk region, but warnings from Turkey forced them to retreat.¹⁶⁹

After the invasion, as a response to the U.S. request, Turkey decided to send troops to Iraq. However, Kurdish groups opposed this idea and the U.S. removed its request from the table.

Today, it is apparent that these groups feel some discontent toward Turkey, however; it is hard to understand their motivations from a Turkish perspective. Even today, Turkey provides the fuel, the food and water consumed by Iraqis, and naturally, by these groups.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, Turkey imports electricity

¹⁶⁵ Kemal Kirisci, "The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy," in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, ed. Lenore G. Martin and Dimitris Keridis (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2004), p. 292.

¹⁶⁶ Kirisci, p. 307.

¹⁶⁷ Balbay, p. 99.

¹⁶⁸ Kirisci, p. 308.

¹⁶⁹ Dulger, p. 8 and Fırsatçılık sökmedi, Milliyet <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2003/04/11/guncel/agun.html> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁷⁰ Daniel Fried, "The United States and Turkish Relations and the Challenges Ahead," DISAM 9, No.3, (July 2007), p. 93.

into northern Iraq at a much cheaper rate than the Turks themselves pay for it.¹⁷¹ As in 1991, Turkey continues to provide as much as it can to the Iraqi people and desires the well-being of all Iraqi people.

The future of Iraq is significant for Turkey. Turkey wants to see a unified and stable Iraq for the benefit of the future of the whole region. This also means that Turkey opposes the idea of any independent Kurdish state in the region. This sensitivity of Turkey has been well known by both the U.S. and the Iraqis. However, there have been attempts by Kurdish groups to force a demographic change in the Turkmen-populated cities of Kirkuk and Telafer whereby Turkmens are being replaced with Kurds.¹⁷²

In March 2005, the chair of the Ankara branch office of the Iraqi Turkmen Culture and Cooperation Association, Mahmut Kasapoglu, stated that because of the U.S. military operation in Telafer, over thirty thousand Turkmens had to leave their homes. Kasapoglu argued, "The American military operation, with the collaboration of local Kurds, sought to erase the Turkmen-populated region located between the Barzani region in northern Iraq and the Syrian Kurds."¹⁷³ Umit Ozdag, an important Turkish scholar, comments, "The U.S. military operation was aimed at forcing the Turkmen population in Tal Afar to emigrate and to ensure their replacement by a flow of Kurdish migrants."¹⁷⁴

Another incident that has fed suspicion about U.S. motives happened at the NATO Defense College in Italy on September 15, 2006. There, during one seminar, an American lieutenant colonel used a map showing eighteen different

¹⁷¹ İste Türkiye'nin enerji politikası: Vatandasa pahalı, Irakliya ucuz elektrik, Radikal <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=224589> (accessed August 1, 2007).

¹⁷² Banu Eligur, "Turkish-American relations since the 2003 Iraqi War: A Troubled Partnership," *Middle East Brief*, No. 6, (May 2006), p. 3.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Banu Eligur, "Turkish-American relations since the 2003 Iraqi War: A Troubled Partnership," *Middle East Brief*, No. 6, (May 2006), p. 3.

cities in Turkey inside an area labeled "Kurdistan."¹⁷⁵ This event concluded with phone calls between both countries' Chiefs of General Staff.

It is also a fact that more events have happened than can be cited here in this context. On the other hand, the events cited here have satisfactorily reflected Turkish opinion on these matters. The perception of Turkish sensitivity from the U.S. side will also be understood in the near future. As Sanli Bahadir Koc expressed, the referendum in Kirkuk will be the best indicator as to U.S. attitudes and its plans for the future of northern Iraq.¹⁷⁶

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Before attempting to express the recommendations, it is best to emphasize that according to the polls, 74 percent of the Turkish people see the PKK/KONGRA-GEL as the thorniest issue in the Turkish-American relationship.¹⁷⁷ Above all, it is highly important to restore confidence. To do this, the PKK/KONGRA-GEL must be eliminated and both countries should work hard to preserve Iraq's territorial integrity. Another factor that demands attention is that of the European Union's effect on Turkish-American bilateral relations. In contrary to Graham E. Fuller's statement that:¹⁷⁸

In my view, the world will likely witness increasing tactical and even strategic divergence between the U.S. and EU that to some extent will be natural, regardless of who holds political power in Washington.

¹⁷⁵ NATO'da 'bolunmus Turkiye' haritasi, CNN Turk http://www.cnnturk.com/TURKIYE/haber_detay.asp?PID=318&HID=1&haberID=238663 (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁷⁶ Sanli Bahadir Koc, "ABD'nin Kuzey Irak Politikasi ve Turkiye'nin cikarlari uzerindeki etkileri," *Stratejik Analiz*, (June 2007), p. 35.

¹⁷⁷ Turkey-USA Relations Survey Results, ISRO http://www.turkishweekly.net/us-tr_eng.pdf (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁷⁸ Graham E. Fuller, "Turkey's Strategic Model: Myths and Realities," *The Washington Quarterly* 27, No.3 (Summer 2004), p. 59.

It is assumed here that transatlantic relations will not diverge, and in return, will not have negative consequences on Turkish-American bilateral relations. Hereafter, Turkey and the U.S. will have more avenues to share, cooperate, and even fight for. To achieve the aim of this thesis to restore and improve relations, Turkey and the United States can follow three paths.

1. Alliance

Turkey and the U.S. decision makers, as it can be understood from Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's last visit to Washington, tend to call the relations a strategic partnership. This terminology has two consequences. The first one is in the decision makers' minds, and the second one is in people's minds. With this terminology, both parties assume that the other party shares the same strategic interests for realizing their expectations. For instance, in 2003, before the invasion, Turkish consent to allow the U.S. to open the northern front was a prevention-taking measure as well as a desire to have a say in the future of Iraq; it was not about the overthrow of Saddam. For this reason, it is better to term the relationship an alliance, at least for now.

Moreover, this author does not agree with Kemal Koprulu, who argues:¹⁷⁹

The fundamental difference between Washington and Ankara in their Middle East approach is that Washington supports change and Ankara is supporting the status quo.

Actually, the main difference is that Ankara does not have a preemptive strategy. Besides, Turkey, in parallel with Ataturk, sees the war as a crime, even if it is inevitable. However, when national interests are at stake, Turkey does not hesitate to act militarily. For instance, in 1998 Turkey threatened a military intervention with Syria.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ Koprulu, p. 12.

¹⁸⁰ Suriye'ye savas planlari hazirdi, Radikal
<http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=132780> (accessed March 1, 2007).

This author agrees with R. Nicholas Burns that the year 2008 will be very important in terms of bilateral relations.¹⁸¹ The U.S. decision makers look to the Middle East from their greater or broader Middle East perspective. As understood from the Shared Vision statement signed by both parties, the Turkish administration has also accepted this plan.¹⁸² In turn then, it can be argued that the main choke point is how this plan will be executed. Moreover, this issue has been a main point of tension on the bilateral agenda for both administrations.

The U.S. administration's focus on Iran and Syria will increase if there is no change in Washington's policy. However, Turkey has strengthened its ties with both countries in the last few years. Syria and Iran expressed their support for Turkey in its fight against the PKK/KONGRA-GEL and offered cooperation against terrorism.¹⁸³ Turkey and Iran signed energy agreements in 2007,¹⁸⁴ but the U.S. administration criticized this agreement.¹⁸⁵ As Janice Weiner, a political officer in the US Embassy in Ankara comments:¹⁸⁶

While we understand the importance of Turkey having stable relations with neighbors, we strongly differ on the means.

It is obvious that the U.S. and Turkey will not be able to agree on policies toward Syria and Iran. At first glance, the countries' policies seem to contradict each other, however, the policies can also be seen as complementary. Turkey's

¹⁸¹ R. Nicholas Burns, "The Future of the U.S.-Turkey Relationship" (remarks at the Atlantic Council, Washington, USA, September 13, 2007).

¹⁸² Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue to Advance the Turkish-American Strategic Partnership, U.S. Department of State <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/68574.htm> (accessed March 1, 2007).

¹⁸³ Suriye ve İran: Türkiye ile teröre karşı işbirliği yapacağız, Milliyet <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2007/10/29/son/sondun32.asp> (accessed November 1, 2007).

¹⁸⁴ Türkiye-İran arasında enerji anlaşması, CNN Türk http://www.cnnturk.com/EKONOMI/DUNYA/haber_detay.asp?PID=39&haberID=376414 (accessed November 1, 2007).

¹⁸⁵ US chides Turkey for gas deals with Iran, Turkish Daily News <http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/article.php?enewsid=82668> (accessed November 1, 2007).

¹⁸⁶ Svet, p. 75.

diplomatic efforts can lead to a success for both issues — even for the whole region. As Graham E. Fuller cites:¹⁸⁷

Turkish-U.S. relations will flourish, and Turkey will be more likely to contribute to stability in the region as a whole if the United States...allows Turkey to develop its own independent regional relations.

If the proliferation of the shared values in the Middle East is the objective for both U.S. and Turkish administrations, then there should be no disagreement as long as the objective is achieved.

2. Balkans, Caucasus, and Central Asia

Washington focuses on the nuclear efforts in Iran as a primarily a bomb-building one, and the Bush administration has declared several times that a military option was on the table against Iran.¹⁸⁸ If we assume that the Bush administration decides to act militarily against Iran and seek Turkey's cooperation, this situation will be very difficult for Turkey. Even though Turkey has affirmed that a nuclear-powered Iran would not be welcomed in Turkey, in the absence of a UN decision, Turkey will not participate in any military action against Iran.¹⁸⁹ If we take this assumption as a reference, then stability in the Middle East cannot be realized in the near future.

Turkey and the U.S. cannot expect cooperation from one another until someone changes its policy. Therefore, in the meantime, both countries should focus their attention more on the other regions. Turkey and the U.S. have common interests in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia. While both

¹⁸⁷ Fuller, p. 64.

¹⁸⁸ Bush says all options on table on Iran, *Reuters* <http://www.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSN1945300920070619> (accessed September 1, 2007).

¹⁸⁹ Remarks with Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Gul after Their Meeting, U.S. Department of State http://turkey.usembassy.gov/secstate_042506b.html (accessed March 1, 2007).

countries act unilaterally, according to their national interests in the Middle East, they can continue to cooperate in the other regions. In short, while Turkey and the U.S. carry out an “ignoring-the-obvious” policy in the Middle East toward each other, they could and should preserve their alliance of close cooperation in the other regions.

3. Strategic Partnership

It is acceptable that Turkey and the United States term their relationship an alliance in the two previous discussions. However, in this discussion, the bilateral relationship has a chance to evolve to the strategic partnership level. As John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt argue, Israel and the Israeli lobby in the U.S. shape Washington’s Middle East policy.¹⁹⁰ If the Bush administration (or the following administration) changes its U.S.-Middle East policy and centers it on Turkey instead of Israel, then the alliance would strengthen and flourish.

Of course, this does not mean that Washington’s close relationship with Israel is an impediment to the U.S. relationship with Turkey. Turkey, too, has good relations with Israel. But, what is argued is that if Turkey became the center of the U.S.-Middle East policy, it would be easier to reach a solution in the Middle East Peace process. Moreover, this would also lead to a decrease in anti-Americanism in the Middle East region. Peace and stability in the Middle East would have huge consequences throughout the world, and these successes would encourage people toward democracy and freedom.

Turkey and the U.S. will more than likely choose one of the options listed above. Nonetheless, it is important to create different networks between two nations. Moreover, as O. Faruk Logoglu touched on, the seven billion dollar trade volume was not sufficient.¹⁹¹ More importantly, interaction among social groups,

¹⁹⁰ John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, *Israel lobby*, trans. Atasay Erongun, 21. Yuzyil Turkiye Enstitusu <http://www.21yyte.org/tr/yazi.aspx?ID=1172&kat1=3> (accessed November 1, 2007).

¹⁹¹ O. Faruk Logoglu, “Turkiye-ABD iliskileri: Bugun, Yarin,” *Stratejik Analiz* (November 2006), p. 40.

NGOs, think tanks, business associations, sport clubs, universities, and many other apolitical institutions and civil societies are vital for the future of the bilateral relations. It is these more important motivations that come from the people of both countries that would be instrumental in improving and strengthening the bilateral relationship between Turkey and the U.S.

In order to achieve this, a mutual fund that can be used by both countries' civil societies could be constituted. The civil societies' interactions may be integral in eliminating the Armenian Resolution crisis. Consequently, this will create an atmosphere where both nations can look at the situations from the other's perspective, a prerequisite for a healthy and strong relationship.

Finally, it is important to remember and mention Ataturk's vision of Turkish-American relations. It is a duty for citizens of both nations, especially in troubled times, to refresh our minds with this great leader's vision:¹⁹²

The Turks are already a democratic nation. If this fact has not been understood by today's civilized world I must direct attention to the remarkable comments made by U.S. ambassador regarding the last days of the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, the American people have always relied and depended on democracy to identify them as a nation since their inception. It has been through this blessing that they have been placed amongst today's civilized world as a new country. This has given them acceptance as a new nation. Thus the Turkish people feel a strong sentiment of love and understanding towards the American people. I do hope that the observation of this fact will encourage further dialogue and warm relations between the two nations; but this will not be all! I am sure that this will also allow the rest of the civilized world to have more good will towards one another and erase all past negative fables and experiences; thus leading the world towards a more peaceful and lawful experience.

¹⁹² Ataturk's address to the Americans, <http://www.aboutataturk.org/> (accessed March 1, 2007).

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